

## **CHAPTER 511**

### **POSITION CLASSIFICATION**

**1. PURPOSE.** To establish procedures for the preparation and submission of position descriptions (PDs) to Human Resources Office (HRO), Norfolk for classification review, advisory evaluation, processing and/or forwarding to the Human Resources Service Center (HRSC) East for classification action or processing.

**2. ASSISTANCE.** Please refer to Chapter 001 of this Manual for the telephone number to call for additional information or further assistance relative to this Chapter.

**3. CLASSIFICATION AUTHORITY.** Title 5 of the U.S. Code established the Position Classification System. SECNAVINST 12510.9 of 26 August 1986 and implementing major claimant instructions delegate classification authority to heads of activities under Managing to Payroll (MTP). This authority may be further delegated to the Director, HRSC East in the servicing agreement between the Activity Head and the Director, HRSC East/HRO Norfolk. The authority may be retained by the Activity Head under MTP and/or delegated as desired within the activity management structure.

**4. RESPONSIBILITIES.** The Activity Head has responsibility for administering the program in compliance with Office of Personnel Management (OPM), Department of Defense (DoD) and Department of the Navy (DON) policies, procedures and standards, as well as ensuring that all subordinate levels of Military and Civilian Management exercise their responsibilities within the program, i.e., ensure that descriptions of positions are kept current and accurate. The HRSC East Director is responsible for the administrative processing of position actions, for maintaining official PDs for non-MTP activities, and for providing classification services when classification authority is delegated by the Activity Head. HRO Norfolk is responsible for providing advisory services on classification issues. HRO Norfolk also provides training for activity managers/supervisors who will exercise delegated classification authority under MTP.

**5. DOCUMENTATION OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.** Line management is exclusively responsible for assigning duties and responsibilities to positions. These duties and responsibilities are documented by PDs. PDs do not control assignments, but instead report the current assignment and those duties and responsibilities which may be assigned over a reasonable period of time. PDs are also used in other personnel actions, e.g., recruitment, performance evaluation, and training, and are also the basis for authorization of payment of public funds. Thus, it is imperative that PDs fully and accurately state the principal duties, responsibilities and supervisory relationships of positions and that they be current. PDs are a major determinant of retention standing for placement or separation under reduction-in-force (RIF).

## 6. TYPES OF POSITION DESCRIPTIONS AND CHANGES

a. A *basic PD* is a fully described position that contains a complete description of duties, responsibilities, supervision, etc. Both nonsupervisory and supervisory positions may be written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format (see Appendix A of this Chapter). Other acceptable formats are the Federal Wage System (FWS) format; the General Schedule Supervisory Guide's Six-Factor format; and the approved format for Senior Executive Service or Senior Level positions (SES/SL). Assistance with these formats may be obtained from the HRO Norfolk Classification Department. New descriptions requiring classification should be submitted for action along with a Request for Personnel Action (SF-52) (see Chapter 295 of this Manual) or an electronic SF-52 generated using the Personnel Process Improvement (PPI) Suite. The PPI Suite is the automated system for the management and retrieval of personnel data and processing of personnel actions.

b. *Statement Of Differences*. Activities may have two or more positions which differ in only a few aspects. These differences, however, may be too significant to allow covering the positions in a single description. In such cases, only one position needs to be described fully. The descriptions of each of the other positions may consist of a reference to the first and a statement of differences from it, e.g., descriptions of positions with varied organizational locations or other minor variances. The PD for such a position will consist of a PD cover sheet (OF-8) with a statement attached describing how the position differs from the fully described PD. Positions in a career ladder require a fully described PD for the full performance (target) level and a separate OF-8 for the entry and intermediate levels with annotations of "entry level" etc.

c. In many cases *minor changes* must be made to basic PDs. These may be accomplished without undertaking a complete rewrite of the basic PD, and may take the form of an amendment or a pen and ink change. In the event such changes are needed you should consult the servicing HRO Norfolk classification specialist regarding submission procedures.

7. **CLASSIFICATION APPEALS**. The classification of any position may be appealed. Such an appeal may concern only the pay category (GS vs. FWS), title, series or grade and must be submitted by the person occupying the position (or his/her designated representative). Adjudication of an appeal may result in no change in allocation, assignment of a higher grade or a reduction in the assigned grade level. Appeals within DoD are final reviews for the agency but may be further appealed to OPM. Appeals to OPM represent the final adjudication authority and are not further appealable. Time limits for appeals and specific appeal procedures are outlined in Appendix B of this Chapter.

8. **ENVIRONMENTAL DIFFERENTIAL**. An environmental differential is additional pay authorized to be paid to an *FWS employee* who is exposed to a hazard, physical hardship, or working condition of an unusually severe nature which cannot be practically eliminated by protective devices and clothing, and which could result in a significant injury, death, discomfort, distress or abnormal soiling of body or clothing. Under the provisions of the FWS, heads of activities are delegated responsibility for paying environmental differentials to FWS employees (full-time, part-time, or intermittent) for exposure to various degrees of hazards, physical hardships, and working conditions of an unusually severe nature.

It will be the objective of each activity to eliminate or reduce to the lowest level possible such working situations. Appropriate pay differentials for payable categories of environmental differentials and the method of payment are prescribed in FWS regulations.

A local work situation which is believed to be covered by the environmental differential pay plan will be reviewed by the head of the activity or his/her designated representative to determine if the exposure meets the circumstances prescribed in regulations for payment and the authorized differential payable. HRO Norfolk will provide advisory opinions when requested. A local situation determined to be covered by a defined environmental differential category must be briefly described by the activity and include the date the determination was made and the official within the activity who is authorized to approve the environmental differential pay assignment. This documentation should be forwarded to the servicing payroll office with a copy filed with the original of the PD.

A local situation that is not covered by a defined category but is considered by a management official to be of an unusually severe exposure will be documented in writing and submitted to HRO Norfolk. HRO Norfolk will then investigate the working situation and prepare documentation as required for submission to higher authority for inclusion in authorized schedules.

**9. HAZARD PAY DIFFERENTIAL.** A hazard pay differential is additional pay for the performance by a *GS employee* of hazardous duty or duty involving physical hardship. A hazardous duty involves circumstances that could result in serious injury or death. A duty involving physical hardship is one that causes extreme physical discomfort or distress and is not adequately alleviated by protective or mechanical devices. Additional information and guidance on what constitutes a physical hardship or hazardous duty and whether or not a differential is warranted may be obtained from the servicing classification specialist at HRO Norfolk.

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## **CHAPTER 511**

### **APPENDIX A**

# **GUIDE FOR WRITING POSITION DESCRIPTIONS IN THE FACTOR EVALUATION (FES) FORMAT**

1. **INTRODUCTION.** Give the complete organizational location of the position, as well as the purpose of the position. (Please note: If the location involves a reorganization or change in title of the organization, please so state.)

## **2. MAJOR DUTIES**

a. If the position is that of a supervisor describe the specific supervisory duties assigned to the position such as leave approval, performance evaluation, discipline etc. Identify all subordinates (military with Officer/Enlisted designations and civilians with designations such as GS-334-9). Specify the percentage of time required for supervisory duties; and/or

b. Describe the nonsupervisory duties assigned to the position. Approximate the percentage of time required for each major duty described.

## **3. FACTORS**

a. *Factor 1, Knowledge Required by the Position.* Kind or nature of knowledge and skills needed. How these knowledge and skills are used in doing the work.

b. *Factor 2, Supervisory Controls.* Identify the supervisor of the position. Specify how the work is assigned, the employee's responsibility for carrying out the work and how the work is reviewed.

c. *Factor 3, Guidelines.* The nature of guidelines for performing the work and judgement needed to apply the references or develop new guides.

d. *Factor 4, Complexity.* The nature of the assignment, difficulty in identifying what needs to be done, difficulty and/or originality involved in performing the work.

e. *Factor 5, Scope and Effect.* Purpose of the work and impact of the work product or service.

f. *Factor 6, Personal Contacts.* People with whom and conditions under which contacts are made.

g. *Factor 7, Purpose of Contacts.* Reasons for contacts described in Factor 6 and level of skill needed to accomplish work through person-to-person activities.

h. *Factor 8, Physical Demands.* Identify the nature, frequency and intensity of physical activity.

i. *Factor 9, Work Environment.* The kind of environment in which the work is performed (e.g., office setting, warehouse, aboard ship, etc.).

4. **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS.** Any special requirements of the position, such as the need for other than incidental travel, a motor vehicle operator's license, etc., should be identified in this section. Position sensitivity, i.e., nonsensitive, noncritical-sensitive or critical-sensitive, along with clearance requirements (Top Secret, Secret, etc.) should also be shown here. Any requirements for overtime hours or unusual working hours or conditions may be addressed here as well.

## **CHAPTER 511**

### **APPENDIX B**

## **CLASSIFICATION APPEALS**

1. **TIME LIMITS FOR FILING AN APPEAL.** There is no time limit for filing a position classification appeal. However, an appeal filed to reverse an unfavorable classification action (change to lower grade) will be retroactive only if it is filed within 15 calendar days from the effective date of the classification action. If the initial appeal in these circumstances is made to Department of Defense (DoD) and the DoD decision does not reverse the local action, a subsequent appeal may be made to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM). However, for the OPM decision to retroactively change the local decision, this appeal must be made within 15 calendar days from receipt of the DoD decision.

2. **CONTENT OF APPEAL.** An employee's formal appeal to either DoD or OPM must be in writing and must provide the following information:

- a. Name, mailing address and office telephone number.
- b. Employing agency and location within the agency (activity name and mailing address).
- c. Exact location of the position (activity, department, branch, section, unit, as applicable).
- d. Present title, pay plan, series and grade of the position being appealed.
- e. The requested pay plan, title, series and grade of the position being appealed.
- f. A copy of the official position description (PD) along with a statement concerning its accuracy signed by the employee and supervisor. If the employee alleges that the PD is not accurate, the appeal will be returned.
- g. Reasons why the employee believes the position is erroneously classified. The employee should refer to position classification standards that support the appeal and should state specific points of disagreement with the agency's classification. A statement of facts which the employee thinks may affect the classification decision may also be included.
- h. Name, address and business telephone number of the employee's representative, if any.

3. **PROCEDURES FOR APPEAL TO DoD.** General Schedule (GS) employees have the right to appeal initially to either DoD or OPM. Federal Wage System (FWS) employees must appeal to DoD first. Appeals within DoD are in the form of a letter and should be addressed, via HRO Norfolk, to the Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service, Field Advisory Services, Classification

Department, 1400 Key Blvd., Arlington, Virginia 22209-5144. Adjudication of an appeal under this provision represents a final decision that cannot be further appealed within DoD. Unfavorable DoD decisions may be appealed to OPM.

**4. PROCEDURES FOR APPEAL TO OPM.** Any GS employee may appeal directly to OPM.

Appeals to OPM must contain the information indicated in paragraph 2 above, and should be addressed to the Director, OPM Atlanta Oversight Division, 75 Spring Street, S.W., Suite 972, Atlanta, GA 30303-3109 for positions located within the state of Virginia. For positions outside the state of Virginia the address for the appropriate OPM Regional Office may be obtained from the servicing Classification Specialist at HRO Norfolk. OPM appeal decisions are final and cannot be further appealed.